

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 6 have been amended herein. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. REQUEST FOR PTO-892 FORM

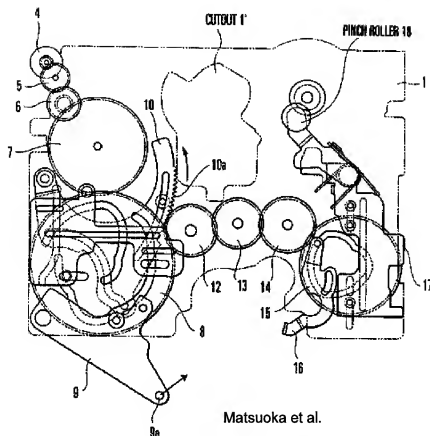
Applicants note that the Examiner applies the reference Matsuoka et al. (US 6,466,395) in the present Office Action as discussed below. However, such reference does not appear to have been officially made of record and request that the Examiner issue a PTO-892 Form indicating that the reference is officially made of record.

Specifically, the Examiner cites Matsuoka et al. (US 6,466,395) in the Office Action, but such Matsuoka et al. reference does not appear in the PTO-892 Form which accompanied the Office Action. Two other Matsuoka et al. references are included in the PTO-892, but not the subject Matsuoka et al. reference. Applicants simply request that the Examiner issue a PTO-892 Form with the next communication to ensure Matsuoka et al. (US 6,466,395) appears on the face of any resultant patent as officially considered.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-6 UNDER 35 USC §102(b)

Claims 1-6 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) based on Matsuoka et al. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection for at least the following reasons.

FIG. 3



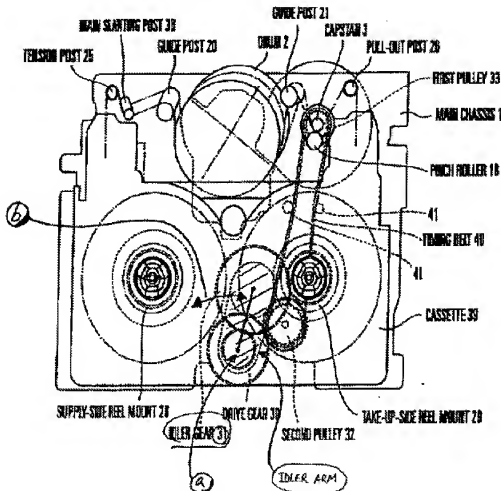
Regarding claim 1, the Examiner points to Fig. 3 of Matsuoka et al. (reproduced above) as including a cutout 1'. The Examiner contends that the cutout 1' represents a portion of the main chassis along a forward end thereof being cut out toward the rotatable head cylinder.

Applicants respectfully submit that in Matsuoka et al., and particularly as shown in Fig. 3, cutout 1' does *not* represent a cutout along a forward end of the main chassis 1. As is better illustrated in Fig. 4, perhaps, the forward end of the main chassis is at the bottom of the figure whereas the rotatable head or drum base 19 is located in the top portion of the figure. Comparing this to Fig. 3, it is apparent that the cutout 1' does not represent a cutout along the forward end of the main chassis as recited in claim 1.

On the other hand, the Examiner may argue that Matsuoka et al. nevertheless shows a cutout along the bottom edge of the main chassis 1 in Figs. 3 and 4 (see, e.g., immediately below elements 12, 13 and 14). The Examiner may argue that such cutout may be interpreted as a cutout along the forward end of the main chassis toward the rotatable head cylinder as recited in claim 1.

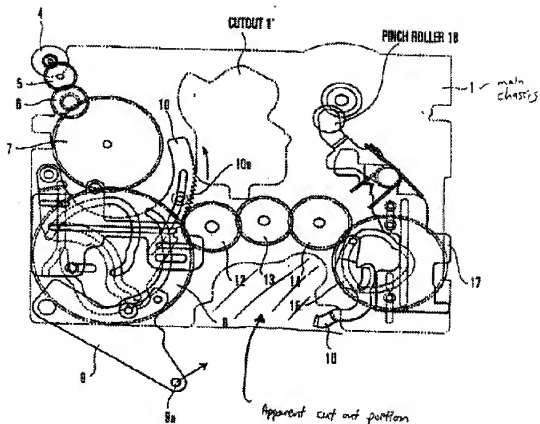
In order to expedite favorable prosecution, applicants have approached the rejection of claim 1 as if the Examiner had intended to refer to the cutout along the bottom edge of the main chassis 1 in Fig. 3 as satisfying the claimed limitations.

Annotated FIG. 1



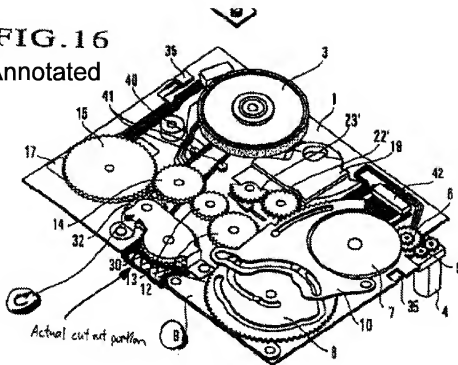
Referring to the above annotated Fig. 1 from Matsuoka et al., applicants note that the idler gear 31 is provided on an idler arm (shaded region) indicated by the broken line. The idler gear 31 rotates about the central axis "a" of the drive gear 30 as illustrated by the arrow "b". That is, the idler arm is provided on the main chassis 1.

Annotated FIG. 3



In addition, referring to annotated Fig. 3 of Matsuoka et al. (reproduced above), applicants note that it may appear that a cutout portion of the main chassis 1 is provided as illustrated in the shaded region. However, since elements 9 and "c" are attached to the main chassis 1, the actual cutout portion is provided in the shaded region as illustrated in annotated Fig. 16 of Matsuoka et al. (reproduced below).

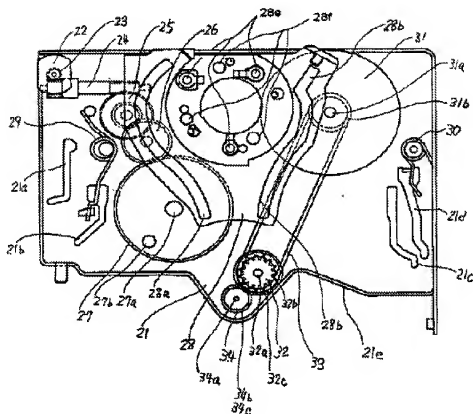
FIG. 16
Annotated



In other words, Matsuoka et al. appears to teach a cutout that is located only partially along a bottom edge of the main chassis 1 as represented in annotated Fig. 16 above.

Conversely, claim 1 has been amended to emphasize how the cut out portion of the main chassis is cut out across the entire forward end of the main chassis. For example, Fig. 2 of the present application (reproduced below) illustrates how the entire forward end 21e of the main chassis is cut out toward the rotatable head cylinder. Accordingly, the size of the magnetic recording and reproduction apparatus can be reduced. (See, e.g., Spec., p. 25, Ins. 10-17).

FIG.2 Present Invention



In Matsuoka et al., as explained above, the cutout does not exist across the entire forward end of the main chassis as recited in amended claim 1. Conversely, Fig. 2 of the present application (reproduced above) illustrates how the entire forward end 21e of the main chassis is cut out towards the rotatable head cylinder.

For at least the above reasons, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 together with depending claims 2-6 is respectfully requested.

III. CONCLUSION

Accordingly, all claims 1-6 are believed to be allowable and the application is believed to be in condition for allowance. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner feel that a telephone interview would be helpful to facilitate favorable prosecution of the above-identified application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Should a petition for an extension of time be necessary for the timely reply to the outstanding Office Action (or if such a petition has been made and an additional extension is necessary), petition is hereby made and the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees (including additional claim fees) to Deposit Account No. 18-0988.

Respectfully submitted,

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DATE: January 31, 2007

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